



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
Washington, D.C. 20240

January 29, 2010

Memorandum

To: Solicitor
Inspector General
Bureau and Office Heads

Attn: Bureau and Office Emergency Coordinators

From: Director, Office of Emergency Management
/s/ Laurence I. Broun

Subject: 2009 H1N1 Flu – Memorandum #5

The Department of Veterans Affairs health system is now offering H1N1 vaccinations to DOI and other Federal employees who are health care or “emergency support staff,” or others who handle clinical specimens potentially containing influenza virus. “Emergency support staff” includes first responders (police, fire fighters, medical technicians, etc.), persons potentially deployed for disaster relief services, and critical Federal government staff in operational or regulatory positions (border security, staff essential for continuity of operations, etc.).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends influenza vaccination as the first and most important step in protecting against the flu. Because supply and availability of the 2009 H1N1 vaccine have increased, the CDC is now encouraging everyone who has been patiently waiting to receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine to get vaccinated at this time. By opening its doors to DOI health care and emergency support staff, the VA expands opportunities for our employees to be vaccinated. This could be especially useful in areas which do not have Federal Occupational Health service but may be proximity to a VA facility. The following steps are necessary to utilize this program:

1. Each bureau that wants to extend the opportunity to obtain H1N1 vaccination through the VA to their employees should appoint a coordinator for this activity and identify that point of contact to the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) H1N1 Coordination Center (phone: 202-461-1059; Email: VHAH1N1CC@va.gov). For the purpose of this activity, Office of the Solicitor, Office of Inspector General, and the National Business Center should establish

their own coordinators. LCDR Elaine Wolff, USPHS, Office of Emergency Management, will serve as the point for all other Office of the Secretary personnel who are eligible and would like to be vaccinated through this program.

2. The appointed coordinators will request an application template from the VHA H1N1 Coordination Center to register eligible staff. Working within their bureau/office, each appointed coordinator will share information to employees within their staff in the manner most appropriate to their organization.
3. Once this registration is complete, an email will be sent from the VA to those DOI employees who have registered notifying them of the nearest VA sites with available H1N1 vaccine and the contact information for these VA sites, along with information on the vaccination days/dates/times, and an indication of whether an appointment for vaccination is needed. When going the VA site for H1N1 vaccination, Federal employees must present a government-issued photo ID.

Visit http://www.publichealth.va.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/targeted_fedworkers.asp for additional information. The OEM point of contact for this project is LCDR Elaine Wolff, Office of Emergency Management (phone: 202-208-5417; e-mail: Elaine_Wolff@ios.doi.gov).